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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001883

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [IR](#) [MOPS](#)
SUBJECT: PRT MAKES FIRST VISIT TO MAYSAN

Classified By: PRT Team Leader Dan Foote for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S/REL MCFI) Summary and comment: On June 20 Maysan PRT made its first trip to the governorate in over a year, accompanying MND-C officials to Camp Sparrowhawk, the forward base for U.S. operations in Maysan located on the outskirts of Amarah. During the visit the PRT met with Iraqi Army (IA) and U.S. military officials to discuss collaboration and the role for the PRT in the wake of current military operations. By their accounts, Operation "Promises of Peace" was going well, and, as of June 20, no shots had been fired and the IA had discovered 34 weapons caches. The IA had detained the mayor of Amarah and the deputy governor on unspecified charges; with investigators and judges reportedly en route from Baghdad. The IA Commander advocated moving rapidly to create employment for Maysanis; however, he noted that GOI ministries had refused IA entreaties for funding toward that end and he worried the opportunity to win the good will of Maysanis would be brief. This visit of American PRT civilians into Maysan opens the door for PRT staff to begin engaging more effectively with the players in the province, with the next visit planned within days. End summary and comment.

OPERATION PROMISE OF PEACE) DAY TWO

¶2. (S/REL MCFI) As of 1400 local time on June 20, no shots had been fired during Operation "Promises of Peace," according to conversations with the IA and U.S. military. While the operation began at 0500 on June 19 to tense, quiet streets, the population started coming out and conducting limited business after 1000 that same day. Operations on June 19-20 concentrated on clearing the west and north of the city. 34 weapons caches had been recovered by the IA, and 16 detainees, including the deputy governor and mayor of Amarah, were under arrest at SH, where U.S. military elements and police transition were working closely with the IA and Iraqi Police to provide advice and coordinate support from Coalition Forces (CF). GOI investigators and judges were reported to be traveling to Amarah from Baghdad to process the detainees. Days three and four of the operation (June 21-22) were expected to focus on deliberate clearance of the eastern and southern areas of Amarah, with day-five operations to begin clearing outlying areas. Once greater Amarah has been cleared, the next area of concentration will likely be Majar al Kabir, a purported hotpot of criminal and militia-related activity to the south of Amarah.

ADVICE FROM IA HONCHO

¶3. (S/REL MCFI) The national Commander of the Iraqi Ground Force Command (IGFC), Lieutenant General Ali Ghedar, offered his opinion that the best near-term course of action for the PRT and U.S. military would be to work closely with the IA, and not the provincial government, to identify priorities and projects in order to find quick ways to gain credibility, such as offering employment to Maysanis to clean the streets.

According to General Ali, Maysanis and Iraqis had lost all faith in the provincial government and council, and their ability to effectively take care of the population's needs, because of their affiliation with militias and their perceived corruption. He explained that the IA had unsuccessfully asked for funding from GOI ministries to assist in creating rapid employment and other development opportunities. U.S. Embassy assistance with the Ministries of Interior, Agriculture, and others to secure GOI funding sources for Maysan development could be critical in swaying the populace away from malign influence during what he described as a limited window of opportunity immediately after military operations.

INTRODUCTIONS AND MEETINGS

14. (S/REL MCFI) PRT officials met with Colonel Mustafa, Deputy Brigade Commander of the 10th IA Division/38th Brigade, who stressed the need for adequate humanitarian assistance (HA), including food, water, medicine and equipment. The 38th Brigade will be responsible for security in the province at the close of current operations. The PRT is working with U.S. Military Civil Affairs colleagues to identify and secure sources of HA which can be delivered and distributed quickly. The Colonel also offered an unsolicited clarification of the IA's lack of authority regarding any actions against provincial government officials, and suggested a follow-up meeting with Brigade Commander General Nabil in the next few days.

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15. (S/REL MCFI) Team leaders also met with Colonel Charles Flynn, Commander of the U.S. 1st Brigade/82nd Airborne and his staff, as well as Civil-Military Operations Chief Major Hoss and Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF) staff, discussing topics of mutual interest and modes of cooperation. All agreed that this initial visit was a big step toward adequate integration of the PRT into the overall mission. While Camp Sparrowhawk has logistical limitations, the PRT needs to have personnel on the ground at Camp Sparrowhawk frequently and for periods of increasing duration as conditions permit.
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